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ABSTRACT

This booklet contains a series of supplementary art projects, for kindergarten through fifth grade, designed to improve reading and art skills through positive psychomotor experiences. Because both reading ability and artistic potential depend on the development of visual perception skills, sensitivity, intuition, imagination, curiosity, and a good self-image, this booklet asserts that stimulating art experiences assist reading development. Each of the outlined projects is based on the usage or definition of words and involves the senses in experiencing word meaning. Projects range from working with clay or giving texture to words, to constructing poetry pictures and creating drawing/word stories. Illustrations, goals, and complete descriptions accompany each lesson. (HAI)

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READING
and
ART

Art projects designed to enhance reading

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(M-CESA)

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A special note of thanks to Gerald Hodges for his countless suggestions and information on how children learn to read, to Rick Kopp for patiently editing and making many valuable improvements, to Ellouise Collins for contributing structural ideas, to Cindy Watlington for proofreading, to my clever wife Jan and my daughter Zoë who assisted with some of the drawings, and to the secretarial and publication staff at M-CESA for their support efforts.

I am fully aware that this booklet only scratches the surface in an area where a minimum of research and experimentation has been done. It is my hope that the enclosed ideas will be of value to the students in their struggles to read and expand on their creativity.

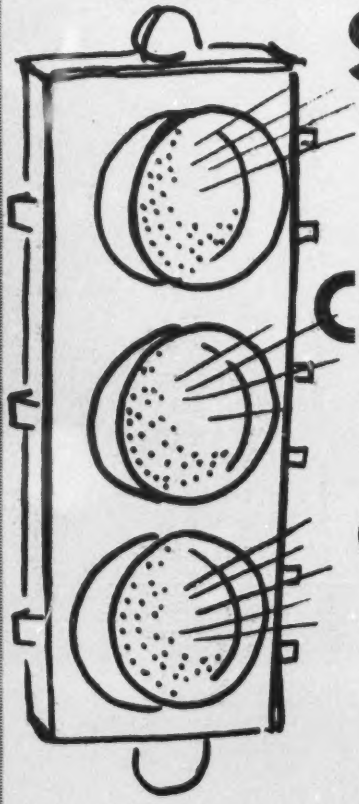
Additional copies of this booklet may be ordered by writing to M-CESA, 2268 Adams Drive, N. W., Atlanta, Georgia 30318.

READING AND ART

The art program occupies a vitally important part in the general curriculum. Art can also provide the student with an improved reading readiness in a most unique way.

In the elementary school (K-5), positive cognitive and psychomotor learning experiences set the stage for both reading success and intellectual growth. The child's self concept may affect his reading comprehension; and both can be improved through stimulating art experiences. That a student's interest in art can help to restore interest and confidence in the academic areas can be seen in the self concept projects in the Kangaroo Kit (published at M-CESA in 1975).

Reading ability and creative artistic potential both depend on the development of visual perception skills, sensitivity, intuition, imagination, and curiosity. Some specific skills required in reading are the following: sensitizing the eye to the printed language (visualization, interpretation); orienting the eye to the left-to-right print flow of wording (visual perception, sequencing, inference); learning to recognize word patterns or phrases and their repetitions (critical judgement, visual perception); predicting what follows in the reading content (predicting outcomes, imagination, curiosity); and learning to discern differences and likenesses among visual configurations such as letters and words (critical judgement, visualization, forming conclusions). All of these composite skills are also central to creative development in art. Once the child adopts a way of seeing word parts which occur frequently (such as the prefix 'tele' or the root 'graph'), then he is better equipped to really look at a new unfamiliar word. His chances for pronouncing, spelling and deciphering the meaning of a word will be improved. This booklet contains classroom art activities designed to enhance reading.



STOP!

Do not use the projects in this booklet as a substitute for the art or reading lesson.

CAUTION!

Care should be exercised so that a child's love for art is not harmed by using art solely as a way to make other subjects more palatable.

GO!

See how many of the projects in this booklet you can use to improve reading and art skills.

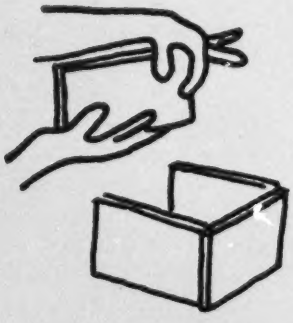
Three possible techniques to use in making the pot:

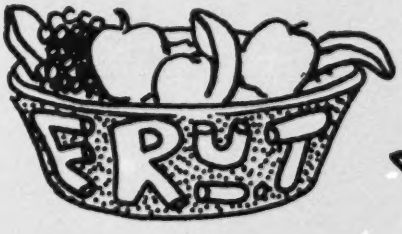
Prepare the clay by kneading (like bread dough, punching and rolling).

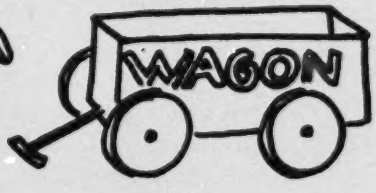
Technique 1. Make a simple pinch pot by taking a ball of clay, pressing your thumbs into the clay creating an opening, and forming into the pot by pressing and squeezing the clay between fingers and thumb until you are satisfied with the shape. Add word design.

Technique 2. Create a coil pot by rolling clay into snake-like coils. The coil is then wound (built up) as shown in drawing. The clay should be moistened between each level and pressed together to prevent falling apart when dry. The inside should be tooled smooth and the outside may be smoothed if desired. Allow the word to become an important element in the overall design of the pot.

Technique 3. A slab pot may be constructed by rolling clay with a rolling pin or bottle into a flat pancake-like form. Cut edges to fit together as shown in drawing, and attach by wetting adjoining edges and pressing together. Seams should be closed by tooling or smoothing with finger. Add the word design and other decorations as desired.







My Notes:

FEEL THE LETTER

Students will participate in a tactile experience that develops fine motor skills and language development.

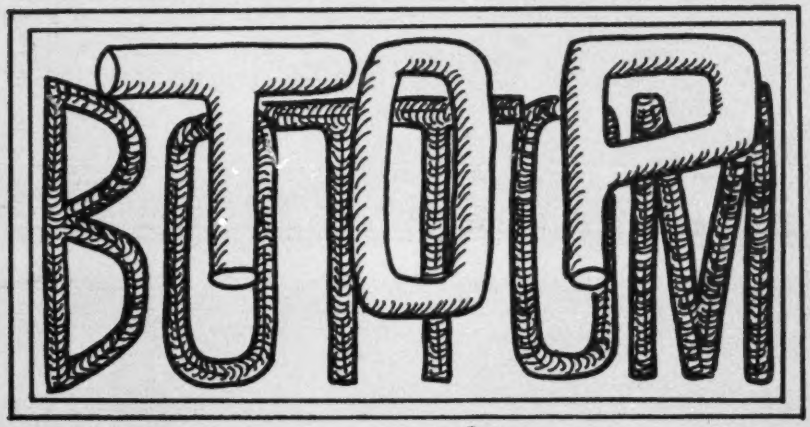
For students who have difficulty using a pencil, writing with one finger in a container of dry salt is effective for getting a true sensation for the shape of and how a letter/word feels. Cover the bottom of a box or shallow pan with a thin layer of salt. If desired, color can be added to the sand by mixing in dry tempera, or use a container with a dark bottom to contrast with the lightness of the salt. Additional designs may be used to accent the words. Photographs or real examples of Japanese sand painting would be an excellent resource for the project. Check the library or art resource personnel for assistance in finding resources.

My Notes:

WORD RELIEF

Students will develop a sense for spatial relationships, differentiation of opposites, and foreground/background perception.

Make a relief sculpture with clay. Pick two words that are antonyms (such as hot-cold, up-down, far-near, etc.) and explore their meanings. Create one word employing the coil or other build-up positive techniques. Design the other word using inscribing, cutting, piercing, hollowing, or some other negative method. This will make the child familiar with two words, the word meanings, the positive/negative art concept, and it will emphasize the contrast in opposites. The most pleasing results are reached when the entire space is planned carefully and utilized completely. Compositional design is very important, so letters should be arranged to best utilize the space. Overlapping may occur, sizes, styles and thicknesses should vary. The "alphabet soup" project from the Kangaroo Kit is a good reference for this activity as it stresses the positive and negative in lettering design.



My Notes:

WORD MOSAIC

The student will produce a word mosaic and thereby demonstrate skill development in fine motor control, procedural organization, language development and differentiation.

Letters and words formed with dry beans and seeds which can be glued to a piece of heavy paper, wood, or cardboard is another way of learning word formation. This idea should be expanded into an exciting design with the word or words as the central focus. Using different varieties of beans will create interest and contrast in the design. The regular white acrylic glues work fine although the drying time is rather long. A good reference is the "Stone Age Beasties" project from the Kangaroo Kit.

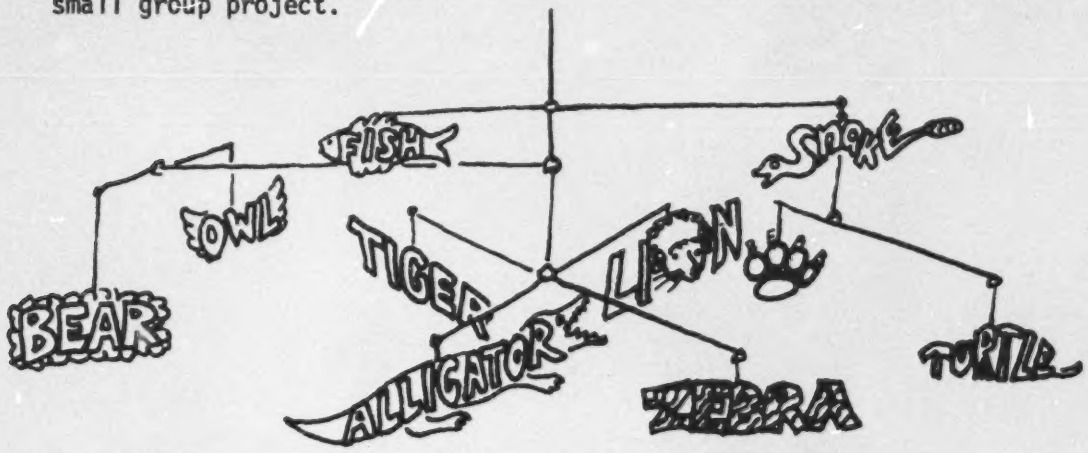
My Notes:

WORD MOBILES

Students will utilize the mobile technique to improve fine motor control, language development skills, spatial inter-relationships, visual and physical balance, and procedural organization.

Mobiles are sculptures that are balanced and suspended in mid air and are usually set in motion by air currents. Letters or word designs that hang and move with the air currents are constant overhead reminders

of words to learn and remember. Students should determine what words, materials, sizes and shapes they will use in making their mobile. Balance is important and must be a prime consideration along with the words selected. Mobiles can be made from bendable and rigid wire, yarn, string, paper, etc. Emphasis should be on design as well as the word content. Students may wish to make word forms resemble the word, as in illustration. Teachers should also stress originality. This is a good small group project.

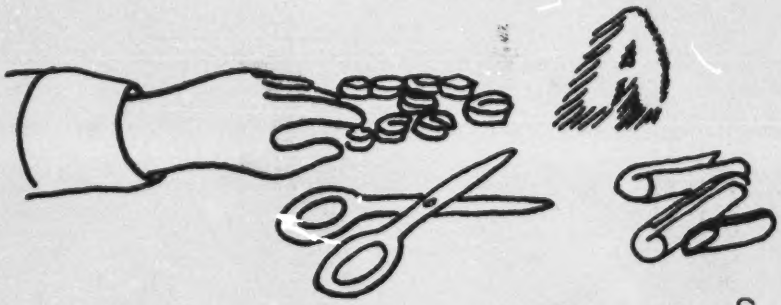


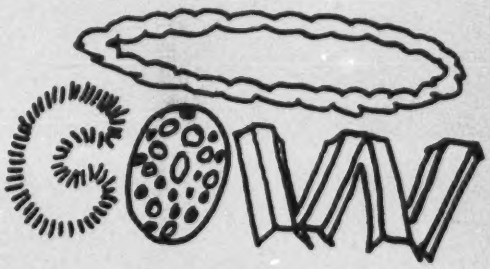
My Notes:

PAPER WORDS

Students will develop fine motor control, word-language skills, foreground/background perception and sequencing skills in manipulating paper to form letters and words.

Words and letters may be made from paper by cutting, tearing, folding, curling, fringing pieces of paper and then gluing them to a larger piece of paper. Experiment with the various methods of making letters and words. Study different type styles (such as sans-serif, bold, delicate, thick-thin, Gothic, Italic, etc.) as motivation for a lettering exercise. See the "Indoor Garden" project in Kangaroo Kit for additional ideas. Many of these projects will have a relief (raised) surface when finished.





My Notes:

COLORED WORDS

Students will use the crayon scratchboard experience to develop skills in reading, contrasting color, organizing, and developing motor control.

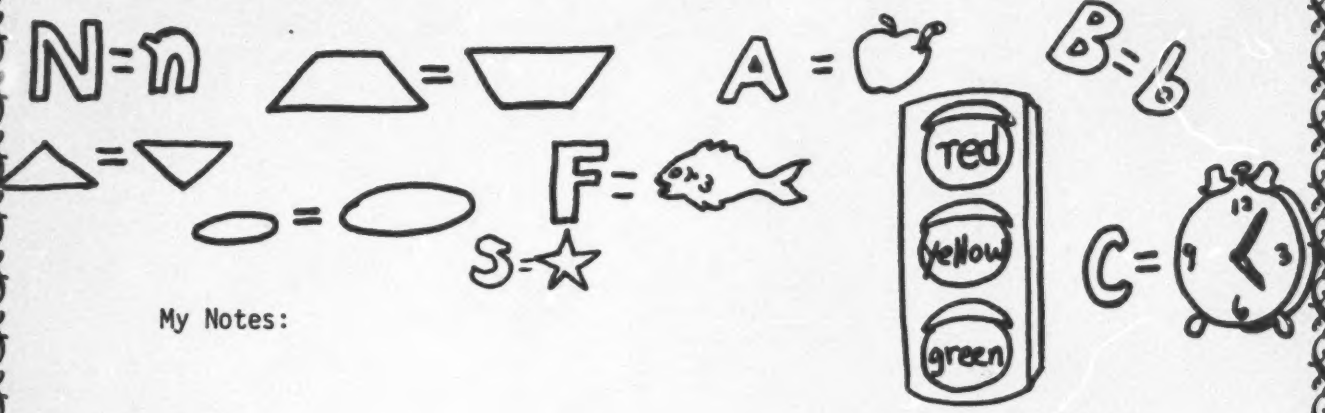
Begin the crayon scratchboard project by covering a paper thoroughly with light colored (yellow, pink, orange) crayons. Bear down hard to permit a heavy layer of crayon to cover the paper. Next, cover crayon with ink and when dry, scratch through the ink coating with a sharp instrument like a pen point, pin, or toothpick. The design should give special prominence to letters or a word, but must be planned carefully so the overall design composition is good. A reference book that describes the process in some detail is Emphasis: Art by Wachowiak and Ramsey.

My Notes:

WORD/PICTURE MATCHING

Students will utilize this traditional readiness activity to gain skills in matching, categorizing, discriminating, remembering, and reading.

Match pictures to their corresponding beginning letter or sound. . . A to apple, B to ball, etc. Matching shapes to shapes, colors to colors or upper to lower case letters is also a good exercise. Students can draw objects and then write the first letter or full word.



My Notes:

WORD TASTE

Students will participate in a tactile/taste experience to improve skills in reading, motor control and visual perception.

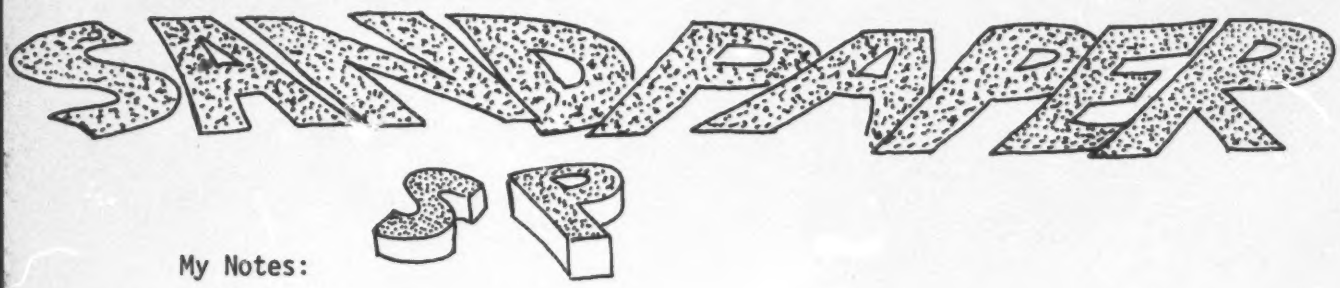
Writing with finger paint practicing letters and words. Try mixing a box of a favorite flavor pudding as "yummy fingerpaint"; Spread it on wax paper or in a shallow pan, and have the students practice writing with their finger. If word is spelled correctly they may lick their finger. Make up your own game using pictures and words.

My Notes:

TEXTURE WORDS

Students will utilize a tactile experience to improve motor control, learn letter structure and letter formation differences, and the concept of texture (one of the elements of art).

Place a sheet of paper over sandpaper letters and rub with the side of a crayon. This will accentuate the shapes of letters with textured patterns. Students may create words and sentences with drawings to illustrate the word meaning. To acquire a set of letters, cut them out of a rough grit sandpaper. It is not necessary, but some folks like to use a wood or heavy cardboard backing for extending the life of each letter. If letters are unavailable, students can draw a letter outline and locate a textural surface. The paper can be placed over this surface and crayon rubbed inside letter outline.



My Notes:

TOUCH WORDS

Students will use texture to improve their reading and design skills.

Touch letters or words may be made by writing in glue or shellac on a card and sprinkling sand over it. Letters may also be cut out of felt for children to touch.

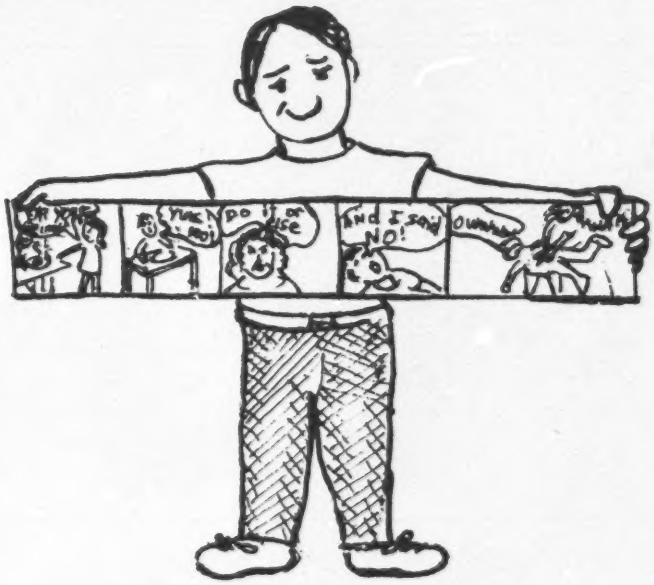
Students may enjoy creating a picture incorporating the descriptive words into the design. Contrast between the roughness of the sand and smoothness of the paper will create textural interest. The color of the paper or cardboard should be selected to contrast with the sand used.

My Notes:

CARTOON WORDS

Students will demonstrate their ability to produce a short cartoon strip. Skills developed are: self discovery, sequencing, visual communication, drawing, reading and writing.

Give each child a strip of adding machine paper or other strip-type paper. Have him draw, comic strip-style, an episode of his daily life such as playing, at home, or at school Next, color in objects with felt tip pens or crayons, then fill in conversation balloons. (Make dictionaries available). This will help bring the child to terms with himself and his life, while aiding him in dealing with words as a tool.



My Notes:

WORD PAINTING

Students will utilize the creative painting process to improve motor control, visual perception, spatial relationships, reading and writing skills.

Painting words using a large brush and tempera paint is often a good exercise for writing improvement, especially for poorly coordinated children. Students may be encouraged to decorate around words in an expressive way that could resemble the meaning of the words. The mixing of colors to produce additional colors should also be promoted.

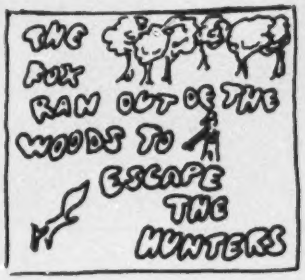
My Notes:

EAT A WORD

Students will integrate visual and language components in a project to improve reading and art skills.

Buy a few packages of alphabet cereal and sprinkle a handful of letters on the table. Call out a letter and let the children find it or ask them to spell out words using the letters. If it is correct, they get to eat the letters. Once the student is familiar with the letters and words they can arrange them into sentences. These sentences may be glued to a paper with drawing or painting added to illuminate the project. Collecting and reading empty cereal boxes is a good offshoot project.

My Notes:



"ALPHABET SOUP"*

The student will create letter/word collage designs to improve skills in reading, environmental concern, self discovery, and spatial relationships.

This letter-word-art project begins by suggesting that students acquaint themselves with the way letters and words are used in our society. Collage techniques are encouraged as ways to improve objects around us at home and at school. Found and "homemade" words may be glued or painted onto already made objects like chairs, boxes, window shades, trash containers, desks, lamp shades, etc., to renew dull objects.

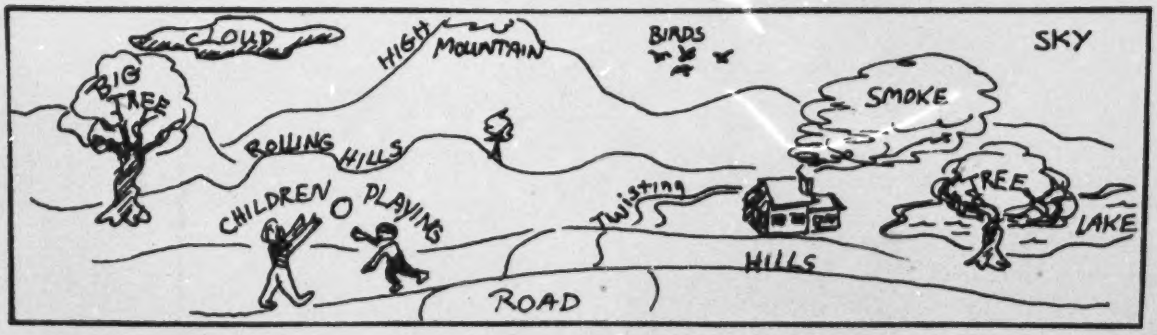
My Notes:

*This project is from the Kangaroo Kit published at M-CESA in 1975. Copies were provided for each elementary and middle school in Georgia.

WORD PICTURE MURAL

Students will use the mural process to improve their abilities in writing, reading, drawing, painting, procedural organizing, dealing with perspective (foregound-background), improving the school environment, and cooperating in group planning.

Design a wall mural that is a landscape, seascape, or playground scene. Fill it with many activities, and try to use all the spaces to their full advantage. Have the children label the objects and events. Try to use the words as part of the design, or incorporate them into the design in such a way that they will be unobtrusive. This is an excellent group project in which students can work together in decision making. Crayons, pastels or paints may be used. Murals can truly improve the aesthetic appearance of the school.



My Notes:

WORD MURAL DESIGN

Students will demonstrate their proficiency in reading, creative writing, drawing and/or painting, composing (design), and planning (organizing) in this cooperative venture.

Allow students to work in groups to design a mural that uses only words. Students should fill a given space with their composition and paint their design with a color combination that they have decided upon. The mural may have a story (optional) where the words are scrambled as demonstrated in the example below. For additional information, see the "Murals" project in the Kangaroo Kit.

My Notes:

TEXTURE WORDS

Students will strengthen fine motor control, language skills, differentiation abilities, and artistic design knowledge.

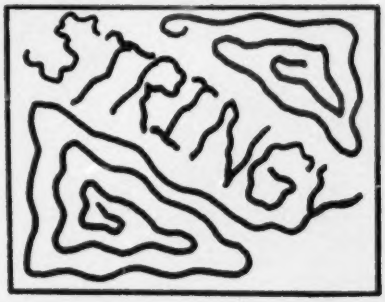
Think of a word that tells how something feels to touch. Write the word making the letters from a material that feels that way. Example - the word 'soft' made from cotton or the word 'rough' made from tree bark. How would you make the word 'slick'? Small pieces of paper with texture words printed on them should be passed out, with each student getting one word. A box of texture materials (yarn, sandpaper, wire, cotton, etc.) should be made available in the classroom along with glue and scissors.

Each student will make a collage (an art form in which paper or other materials are arranged and glued together on a flat surface to create a special picture effect) using the word that they discovered on their slip

of paper. The word will be spelled out in the collage using texture materials that relate to the meaning of the word. The word and associated designs should fill the paper for maximizing message and design.

As a bonus, students will strengthen manipulative skills in cutting, bending and gluing materials in completing their project.

Refer to children's books by Ezra Jack Keats.



My Notes:

ASSOCIATION - WORD/PICTURE

Students will utilize the association process to develop visual images that reflect the meaning of a word.

The front cover of this booklet represents an example of the association process which helps students learn words by relating the visual image with a word. It is generally believed that it takes an average of 77 repetitions of a word for the word to become known by sight to the student. By contrast, it takes only an average of 7 or 8 exposures to a word in an interesting, meaningful context to learn it as a sight word. The classroom teacher should see improvement in student reading and creative skills if the association process is utilized. This project is a form of "mnemonics," which means that it is a system for improving the memory.

Give it a try. Here is how it goes. . . Think of a word that you want a class or student to learn and write it down on the blackboard. Write several sentences in which the word occurs. Imagine what the word means or what may be associated with it. Next, give it meaning by relating it to the actual image. Allow the students to become involved by asking them for their ideas on how to make the word come to life. Try making a game of it. Look at the examples for inspiration and then get started. As an additional resource look at creative lettering designs by Saul Steinberg.

My Notes:

WORD SELF PORTRAIT

The student will demonstrate an ability to communicate his feelings through a word picture composition. Visual acuity, language development, self discovery and communication are skills that are intensified by involvement in this project.

Allow students to have access to various types of magazines and newspapers that they may use for cutting up. Ask them to cut out and collect words that best describe them, such as funny, beautiful, clever, etc.

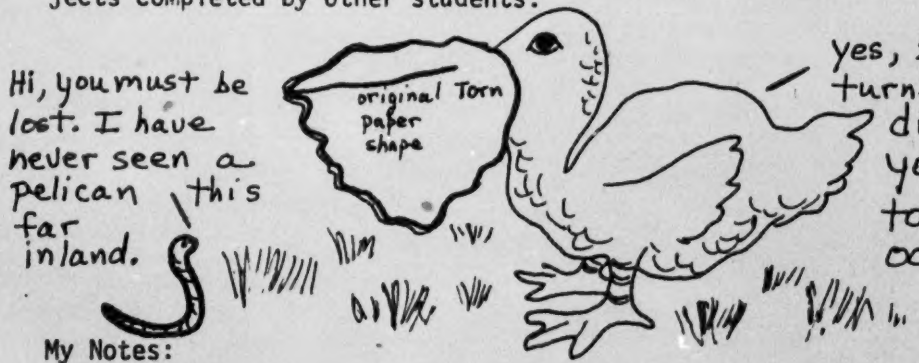
These words are then glued down on a large paper in the form of the student. Words should be moved around sufficiently until the arrangement is best for illustrating the student. Drawing may be added as needed to fill in open areas. Stress imaginative approaches in executing this project. Display projects in room or around the school.

My Notes:

IMAGINARY PICTURE STORY

Students will gain skills in motor control, reading, writing, imagination, and creative art techniques.

Tear out a shape (any form) from colored construction paper and glue it to a larger piece of paper. What does it look like? What does the shape suggest? Could it be an elephant's trunk or the body of a fish? Allow the student to complete the remaining part of his drawing using more paper, or color in with felt tip pens, crayons, paint etc. The student should then write a brief description or story of what is happening in the picture somewhere on the picture. Students could practice reading the projects completed by other students.


Hi, you must be lost. I have never seen a pelican this far inland.
original Torn paper shape
yes, somehow I got turned in the wrong direction. Can you point me toward the ocean?

My Notes:

WORD PICTURE

Students will use the processes of repeating, labeling, associating, drawing, composing (spacing), and communicating in executing this word/ picture project.

The student selects a word and draws a picture of what it means. Using many styles and sizes, the word should be repeated as many times as necessary to achieve a composition that makes good use of the space available. Water colors, markers or crayons may be used to create additional interest.

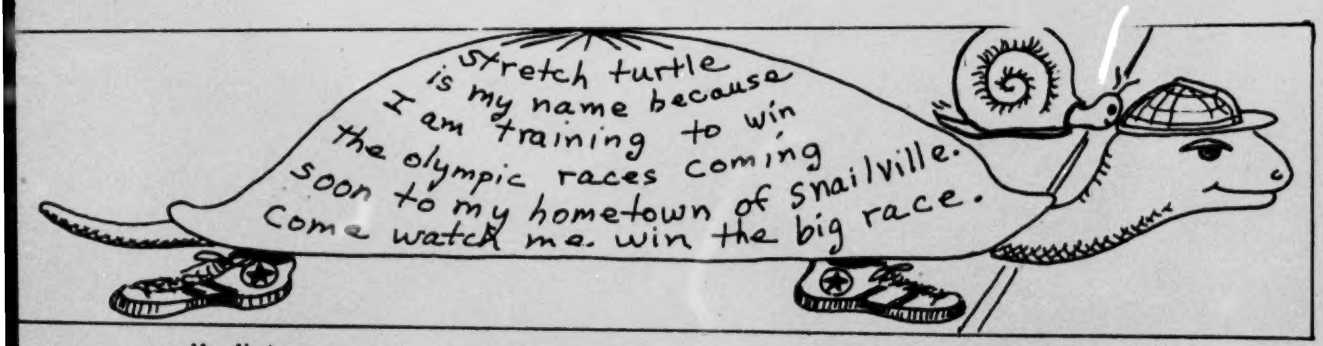
Actual child's drawing by Zoë Voigt - 7 years old 1974

My Notes:

PICTURE STORY

Students will use visual form to reinforce sequential writing skills. Skill development in visual-word memory, proceedural organization, and compositional planning are resulting outcomes.

The student begins this project by making the outline of something about which he would like to write a story. This subject matter could be a car, fish, pig, bird, plant, house etc., and it's outline shape should fill the page. The story is written inside the outline shape and planned so that it fills most of the space.

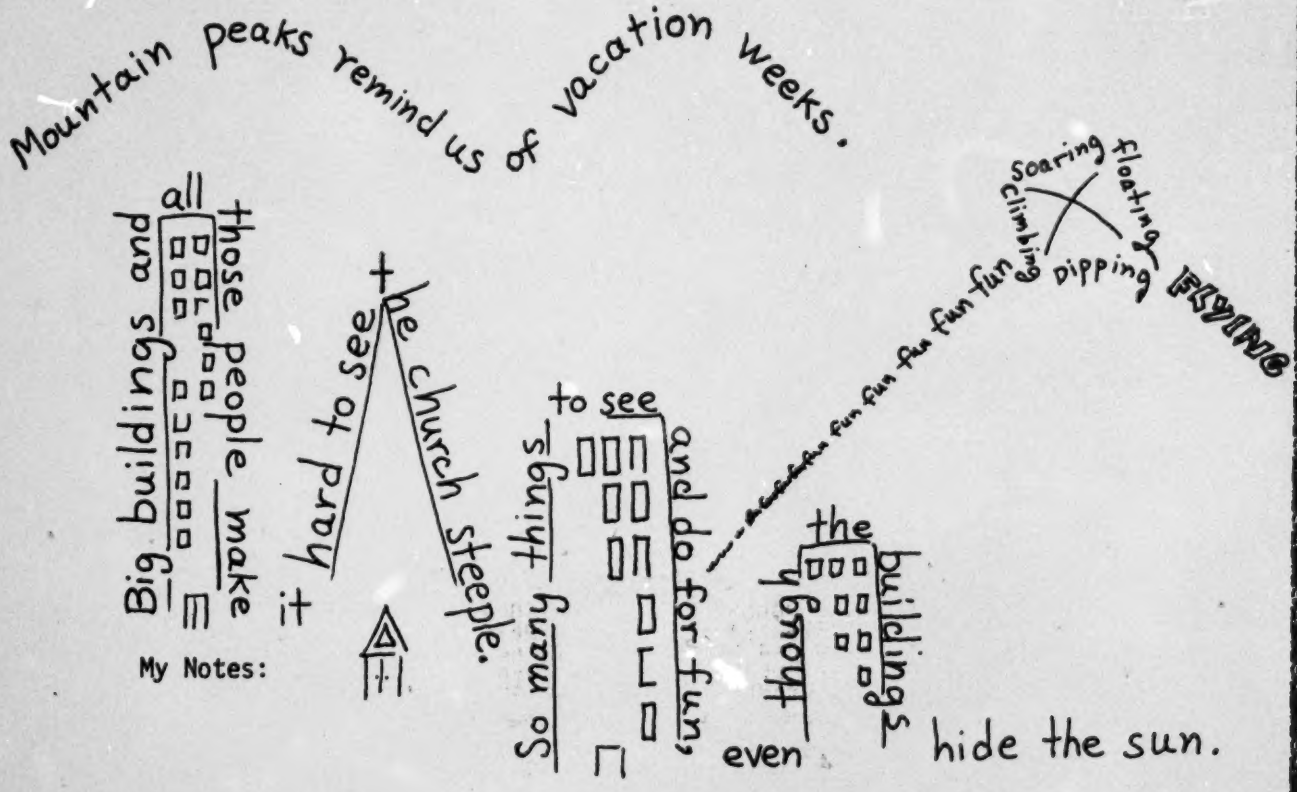

Stretch turtle
is my name because
I am training to win
the olympic races coming
soon to my hometown of Snailville.
Come watch me win the big race.

My Notes:

STREET POEMS

Students will utilize fine motor control, imagination, sequencing, visual perception and communication in creating this language development project.

Street poems can be defined as poems that take the form of, and refer to, the objects they illustrate. Check a book called Street Poems by Robert Fronan for additional ideas. After reading some poetry, the student should begin by writing a poem. Then efforts should be made to see if the words can be arranged to reflect the meaning of the poem. Additional drawing may be needed to clarify the design, and color may be used to add interest.


Mountain peaks remind us of vacation weeks.
Big buildings and all those people make it hard to see
the church steeple.
So many things to see and do for fun,
even though the buildings hide the sun.
fun fun fun fun fun fun
Soaring
floating
climbing
dipping
FLYING

My Notes:

WORD/OBJECT ASSOCIATION

Students will use observation, association, perception, and organization in this language and art enrichment project.

Associate the real object with its name by showing the two together. Objects like a shoe or doll may have cards attached to them with the name written on the card. Children could feel the object, trace their fingers over the letters, say and copy the word. These objects should be displayed in the room at eye level allowing time for children to form a visual association. Objects such as bicycles, watches, dolls, bottles, flowers, etc., should then be set up as subjects for a still life arrangement to draw and

paint. Students can assist in placing objects in the most interesting arrangement.

My Notes:

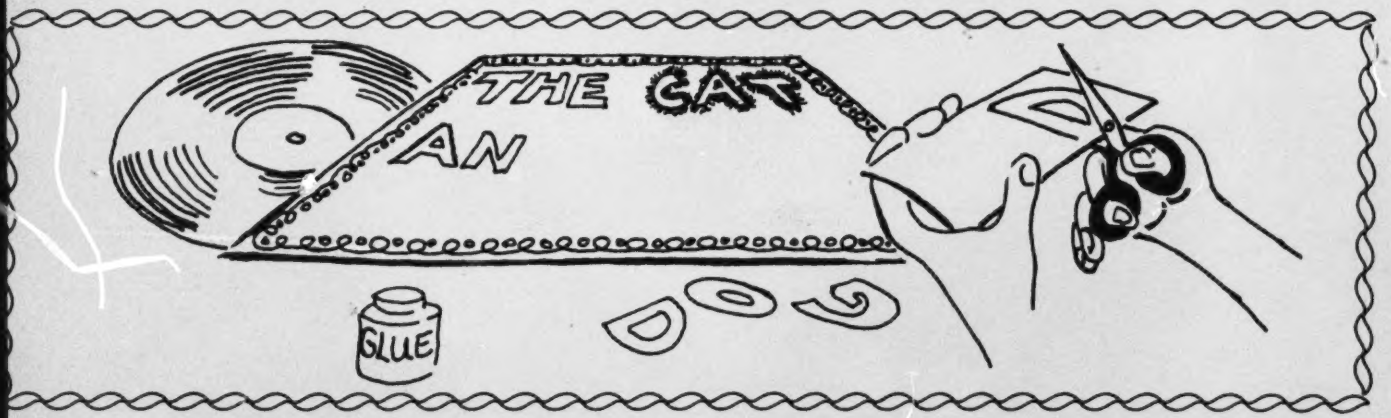
WORD LAYOUT

Students will gain manipulation, perception, differentiation, communication, and language skills in this tactile experience.

Collect examples of different types of printed letters from magazines and newspapers. How do these letters differ from each other? After examining and talking about the many types of letters, allow students to design, cut out and paste letters into words. This will provide experiences in the shapes and characteristics of individual letters.

Next, look for some of the contemporary creative lettering styles, such as ones that can be found in lettering books, transfer lettering company booklets (Presstype, Lettraset, Chartpack, etc.), or examples by artists like Jasper Johns, Robert Indiana, Saul Steinberg, and Tomi Ungerer. Can a type of lettering create a mood or sell a product?

The above exercise and preparation is helpful prior to creating the following classroom art projects: book covers, record album covers, posters, greeting cards, product designs, or advertisements.

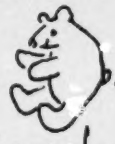


My Notes:

DRAWING AND WORD STORY

Students will gain skills in writing, sequencing, reading, communicating (art is an international language), perceiving, and imagining by creating their own drawing/word story.

In this project the student makes up a true life or imaginary story, and substitutes a drawing for a word at appropriate places in the story.

Once there was a named Yorella. She did not like to hear people say her name so she ran away into the . Yorella was afraid when she saw a  . He was brown, fuzzy and friendly. They became friends and alot because they were happy. named the Wunkie. Wunkie taught her how to for their . Because Wunkie was a bear he did not and could not say the name that hated to hear. This made her very happy. Soon they built a to sail to land where all the bears could talk. This made frightened but she went along anyway. When they arrived at the Wunkie said to her **Princess** real loud and she just loved that name! Then Wunkie magically turned into a and they lived happily ever after.